to keep pace with the production programme of oilseeds.

(vi) Fiscal incentives for increased use of non-conventional oils by the vanaspati industry, exemption from excise duty in respect of refined rice bran, cottonseed and soyabean oils meant for direct human consumption and also for refined solvent extracted oil.

(b) No import of oilseeds has been made so far. The edible oil is imported to bridge the gap between demand and supply as also to check its prices. This has not affected the edible oilseeds production within the country.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Steps have been taken to safeguard the interest of farmers and check the fall in prices by announcing minimum support prices of oilseeds. Support prices of oilseeds for 1987-88 has already been announced.

High Import of fertilizers

*313. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question No. 44 given in the Rajya Sabha on 6th Novembes, 1987 and state:

(a) what are the reasons for which the import of fertilizers was maintained at a high level of 23 lakh tonnes when the consumption of fertilizers went up from 82 lakh tonnes to 87 lakh tonnes and the local production went up from 52 lakh tonnes to 71 lakh tonnes during 1984-85 to 1986-87 and there was satisfactory previous stocks;

(b) which are the agencies from whom the Indian agencies have bought fertilizers during the last three years;

(c) what is the method of buying imported fertilizers; whether by Global tenders or by any other method; and

(d) whether any new tender system was enforced in 1986-87 putting the local producers in disadvantageous position?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI G. S. DHILLON): (a) Import of 30 lakh tonnes of nutrients during the year 1986-87 was considered necessary to achieve the targetted consumption of 103 lakh tonnes. However, on review conducted during the first week of September, 1986, the import was scaled down from the approved level of 26 lakh tonnes to 23 lakh tonnes of nutrients. It was not possible to reduce the imports further because the balance quantity of nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilisers had already been contracted for imports.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. (*See* Appendix CXLIV, Annexure No. 87).

(c) MMTC, the designated agency for import of fertilisers, arranges the required material by global tenders followed by negotiations as well as by direct negotiations based on ruling international prices.

(d) No new tender system was enforced in 1986-87 for procuring fertiliser from abroad.

Production of edible oilseeds

*314. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of use of indigenous edible oils used in the production of vanaspati ghee in the country;

(b) what steps have been taken to increase the production of edible oilseeds in the country; and